MARVEL COMICS
DOUBLE DRAGON™
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AIDED BY POLICEWOMAN MARIAN STEELE, JIMMY AND BILLY LEE WERE FORCED TO BATTLE THE SOURCE OF THEIR FORMIDABLE POWERS: AN ANCIENT DRAGON STATUE INADVERTENTLY BROUGHT TO LIFE BY THE VILLAINOUS NIGHTFALL.
WITH THE AID OF STAN, A MYSTERIOUS STRANGER WHO CLAIMED TO BE THEIR FATHER, THE DOUBLE DRAGON DESTROYED THE STATUE AND RECLAIMED THE POWER WHICH WAS THEIR BIRTHRIGHT.
HOWEVER, DURING THE MELEE, THE WALLS OF OLIGOPOLIS'S MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON CAME TUMBLING DOWN...
...WHICH LEAVES OUR HEROES WITH MORE THAN A LITTLE MOPPING UP TO DO!
HOUR OF THE DRAGON!
TOM BREVOORT & MIKE KANTEROVICH - DOUBLE WRITERS • SAL VELLUTO - PENCILER • BRAD VANCATA - INKS • KEVIN TINSLEY - COLORS • PAT BROSSEAU - LETTERS
EVAN SKOLNICK - MANAGING EDITOR • FABIAN NICIEZA - EDITOR • TOM DEFALCO - DRAGON IN CHIEF

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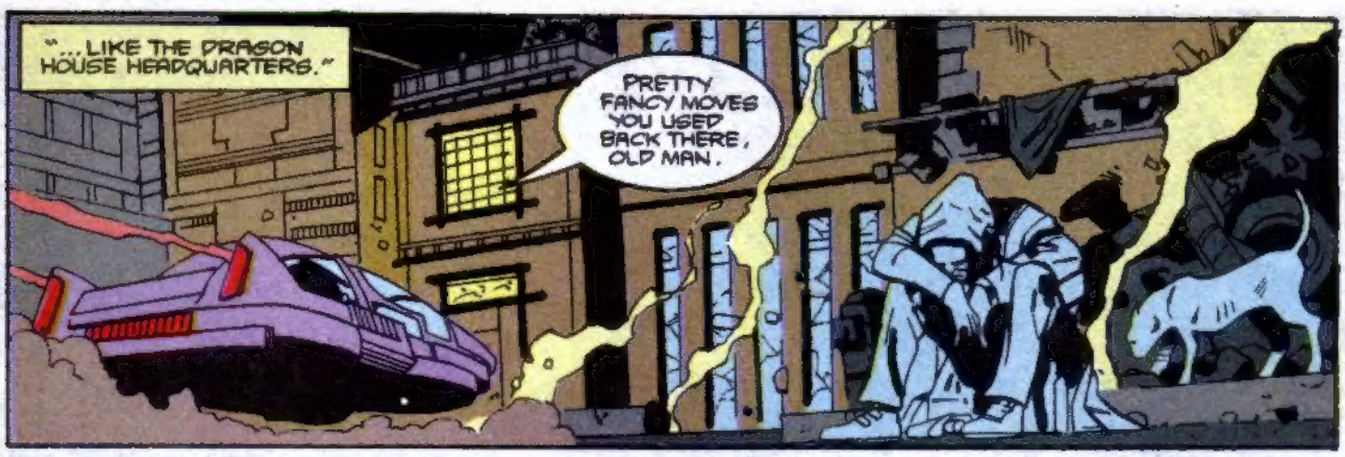
ALL RIGHT, BOYS, THAT'S ENOUGH FRESH AIR FOR ONE NIGHT!
TIME TO GO BACK BEHIND THOSE NICE, COZY LITTLE BARS!
KRAK
DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THEY WERE LISTENING, SWEETHEART! I THINK THEY'RE A LITTLE HARD OF HEARING...
...NOW THAT I'VE KNOCKED THEIR TEETH BACK INTO THEIR EARS!
THEN I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO TEACH THEM SIGN LANGUAGE, "GRAMPS"...
...UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL!
HEY, PAL, YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING ON YOUR TIE!
GOTCHA!
THWOK
FWMAK

YOU'D DO BETTER, MY BROTHER, TO SPARE US YOUR CHILDISH WITTICISMS, AND KEEP YOUR MIND FOCUSED ON THE MATTER AT HAND...
"... AS WELL AS ON THE WELFARE OF OUR ELDERLY ALLY!"
OW!!
THWAK
YOU NEED A HAND, STAN?
THOK
GUESS NOT.
IN FACT...
I DON'T THINK THE OLD GUY NEEDS US AT ALL, JIM!
IT WOULD SEEM NOT!
SSHWAK

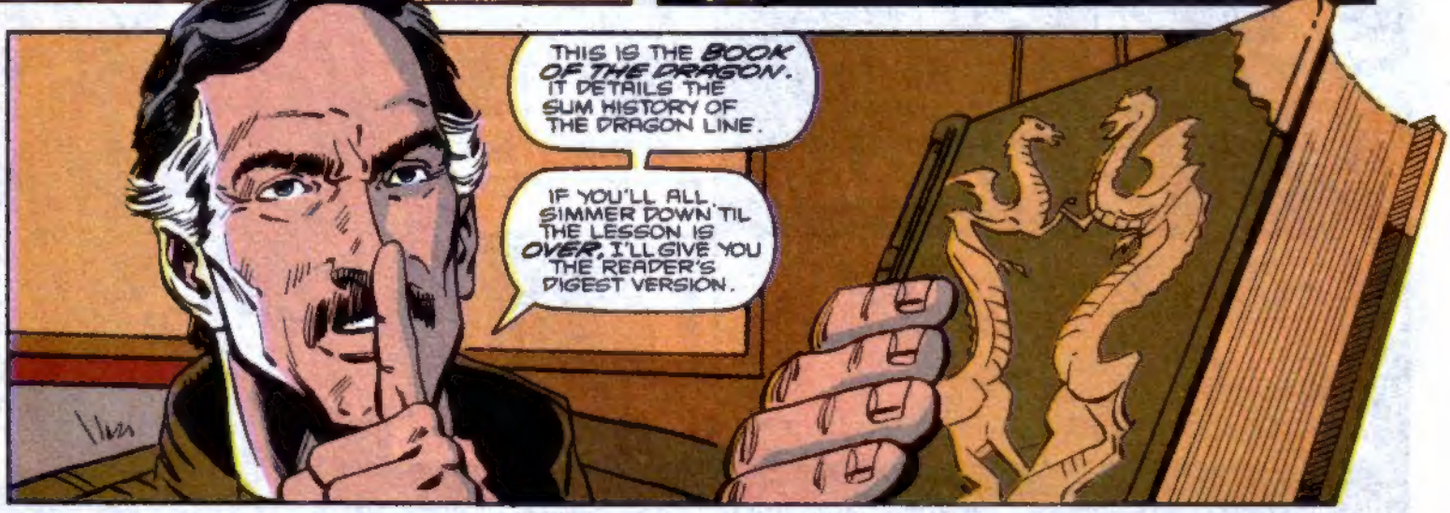
EEOOEEOOEEOO
THIS IS THE POLICE!
ALL PRISONERS RETURN TO YOUR CELLS IMMEDIATELY!
UH...THAT IS, THOSE WHO'RE STILL ABLE TO...
'BOUT TIME!
THERE'S NEVER A COP AROUND WHEN YOU NEED ONE...
...PRESENT COMPANY EXCEPTED, MARIAN!
POLICE
M2PD
M2PD
YOUR ASSISTANCE WAS MOST TIMELY, MY FRIEND. AND APPRECIATED.
MY PLEASURE.
MAYBE SO...
...BUT I'M STILL NOT SURE I BUY THAT LINE YOU'RE HANDING OUT.
SOMEHOW, I DIDN'T THINK YOU GUYS WOULD--WITHOUT PROOF.
RELAX, BILLY. I BROUGHT ALONG A LITTLE SOMETHING THAT SHOULD ANSWER ALL YOUR QUESTIONS.
BUT IT'S NOT EXACTLY FIT FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION...
...SO HOWSABOUT WE GO SOMEPLACE A LITTLE MORE PRIVATE...

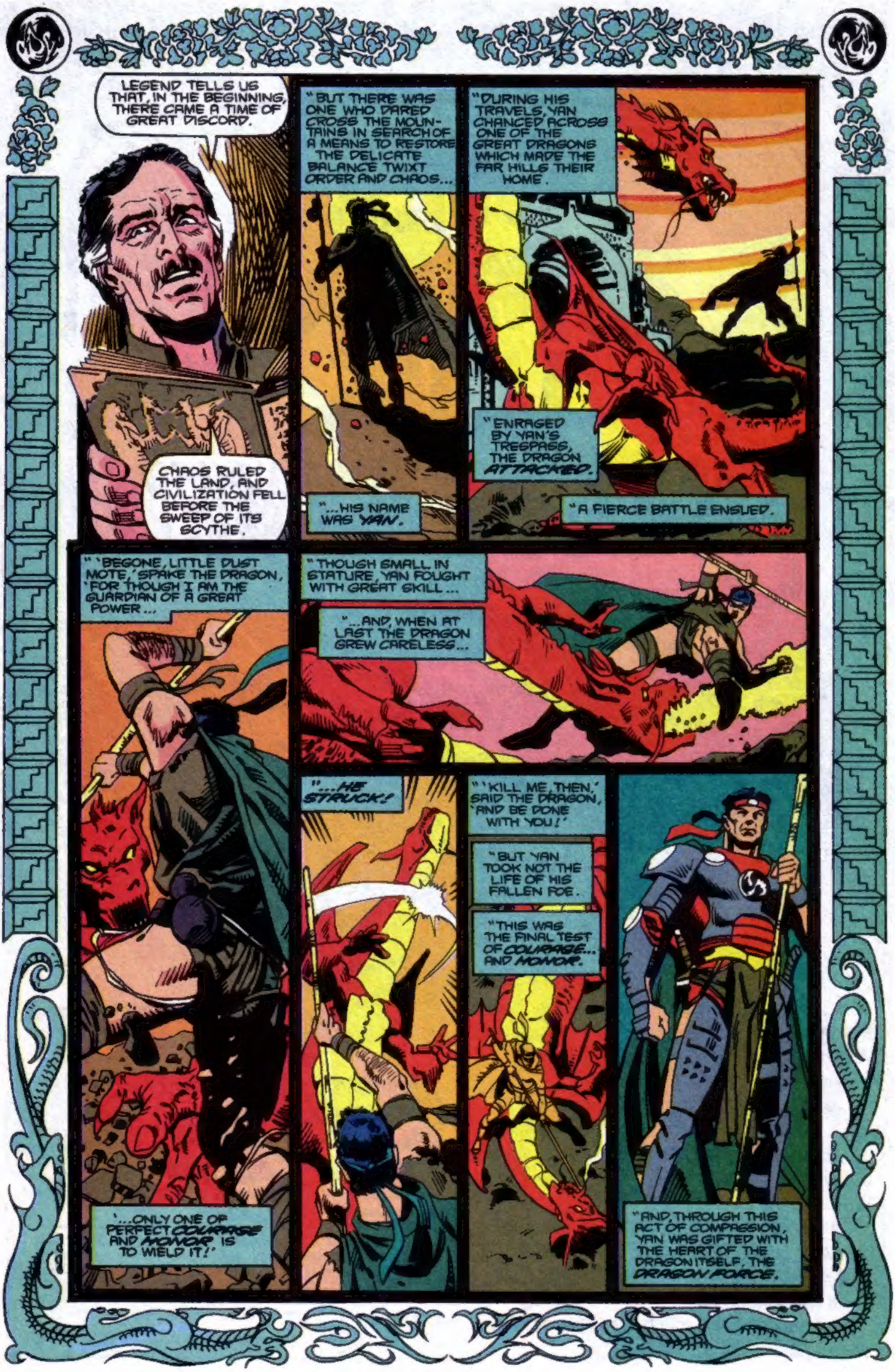

"...LIKE THE DRAGON HOUSE HEADQUARTERS."
PRETTY FANCY MOVES YOU USED BACK THERE, OLD MAN.

SHOULD BE.
GOT 'EM FROM YOUR GRAND-FATHER.
I THOUGHT THE STYLE LOOKED FAMILIAR.
YOU KNEW SENSEI?
CLEARLY THERE ARE MANY QUESTIONS YOU MUST ANSWER...

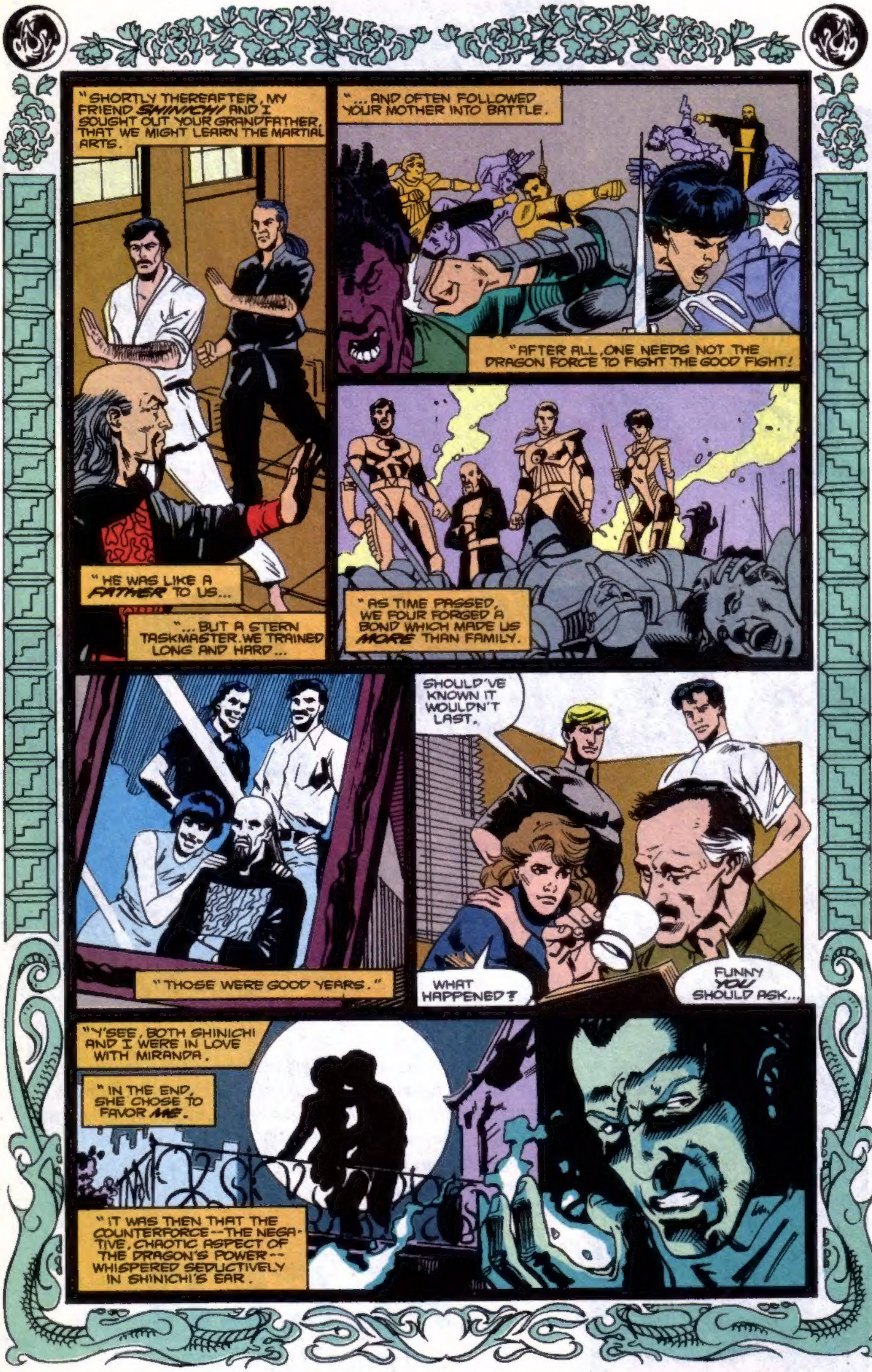
...SUCH AS HOW YOU CAME TO KNOW OUR GRANDFATHER.
AND WHY'D YOU PICK THIS TIME TO SHOW UP?
AND WHAT'S IN THAT SATCHEL YOU'VE BEEN CARRYING AROUND?

THE SATCHEL'S THE EASY PART. IT HOLDS THE ANSWERS TO THE REST OF YOUR QUESTIONS.
BUT--
WHAT--


THIS IS THE BOOK OF THE DRAGON. IT DETAILS THE SUM HISTORY OF THE DRAGON LINE.
IF YOU'LL ALL SIMMER DOWN 'TIL THE LESSON IS OVER, I'LL GIVE YOU THE READER'S DIGEST VERSION.

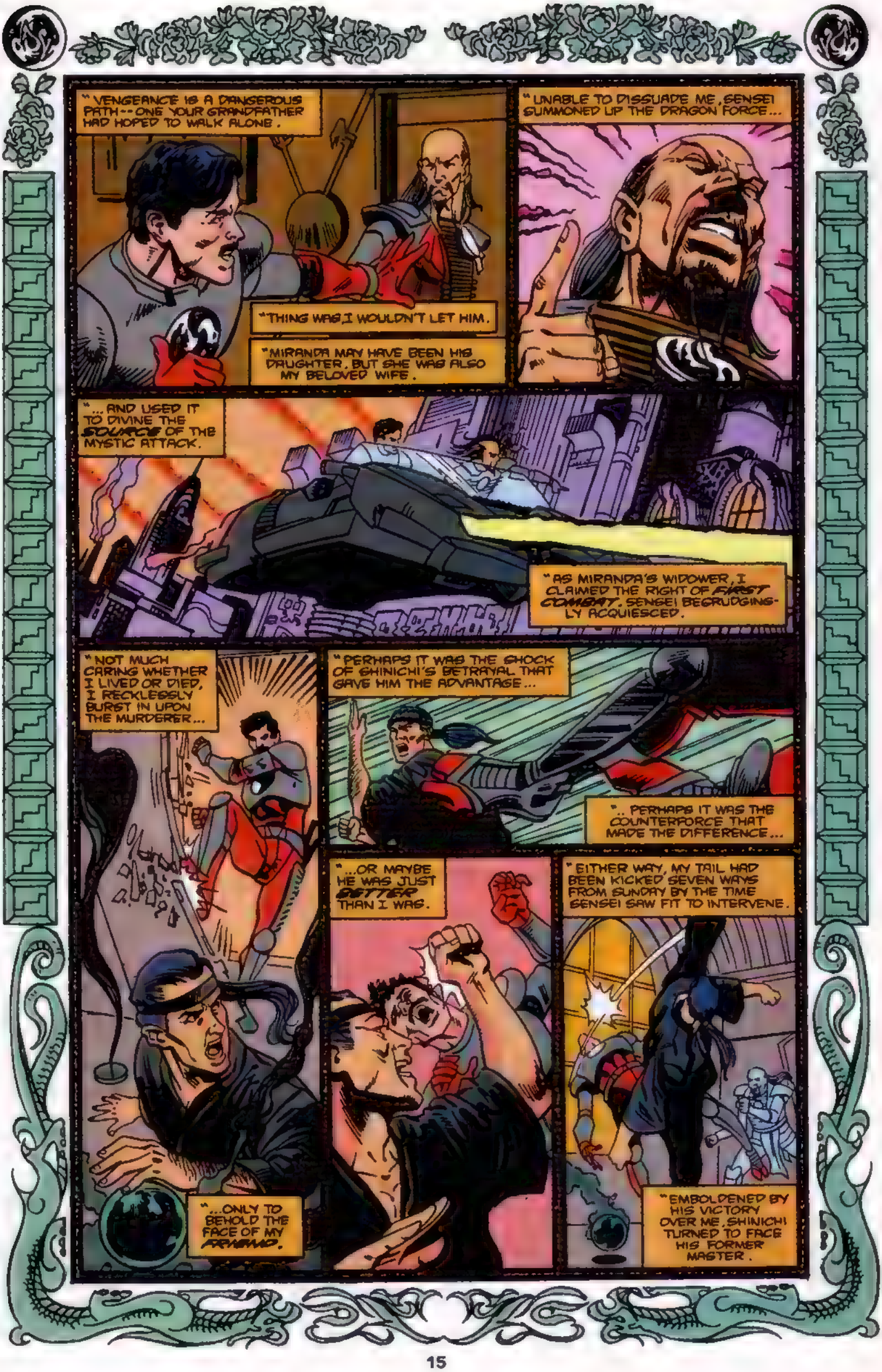

LEGEND TELLS US THAT, IN THE BEGINNING, THERE CAME A TIME OF GREAT DISCORD.
CHAOS RULED THE LAND, AND CIVILIZATION FELL BEFORE THE SWEEP OF ITS SCYTHE.
"BUT THERE WAS ONE WHO DARED CROSS THE MOUNTAINS IN SEARCH OF A MEANS TO RESTORE THE DELICATE BALANCE TWIXT ORDER AND CHAOS...
"...HIS NAME WAS YAN.
"DURING HIS TRAVELS, YAN CHANCED ACROSS ONE OF THE GREAT DRAGONS WHICH MADE THE FAR HILLS THEIR HOME.
"ENRAGED BY YAN'S TRESPASS, THE DRAGON ATTACKED.
"A FIERCE BATTLE ENSUED.
"'BEGONE, LITTLE DUST MOTE,' SPAKE THE DRAGON, 'FOR THOUGH I AM THE GUARDIAN OF A GREAT POWER...
"THOUGH SMALL IN STATURE, YAN FOUGHT WITH GREAT SKILL...
"...AND, WHEN AT LAST THE DRAGON GREW CARELESS...
"...HE STRUCK!
"'KILL ME, THEN,' SAID THE DRAGON, 'AND BE DONE WITH YOU!'
"BUT YAN TOOK NOT THE LIFE OF HIS FALLEN FOE.
"THIS WAS THE FINAL TEST OF COURAGE... AND HONOR.
'...ONLY ONE OF PERFECT COURAGE AND HONOR IS TO WIELD IT!'
"AND, THROUGH THIS ACT OF COMPASSION, YAN WAS GIFTED WITH THE HEART OF THE DRAGON ITSELF, THE DRAGON FORCE.

"UPON RETURNING TO HIS HOMELAND, YAN FOUND IT MUCH AS HE HAD LEFT IT -- BESET BY EVIL, AND SORELY IN NEED OF A CHAMPION.
"NOW AT ONE WITH THE HEART OF THE DRAGON, YAN BECAME THAT CHAMPION...
"...AND, IN THE END, HE AND HIS FOLLOWERS DROVE BACK THE FORCES OF DARKNESS.
"TOGETHER, THEY HERALDED A NEW AGE OF PROSPERITY AND WELL-BEING."
WE KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT STORY, STAN. IT WAS ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS SENSEI TAUGHT US!
TOO BAD HE NEVER TAUGHT YOU WHEN TO SHUT UP AND LISTEN.
NOW, AS I WAS SAYING...
"THE FORCE OF CHAOS COULD NEVER TRULY BE DESTROYED, MERELY BANISHED FOR A TIME.
"KNOWING THIS, YAN HANDED DOWN HIS TEACHINGS, AND THE DRAGON FORCE, TO SUITABLY WORTHY SUCCESSORS.
EVENTUALLY, THE HEART OF THE DRAGON WAS PASSED TO A YOUNG WOMAN NAMED MIRAMEN.
"YOUR MOTHER. MY WIFE.
"CH'IEN XUAI, AS YOUR SENSEI WAS THEN CALLED, WAS PROUD THAT HIS DAUGHTER HAD PROVEN WORTHY TO RECEIVE THIS GREAT GIFT.
"HE HAD MUCH TO BE PROUD OF.


"SHORTLY THEREAFTER, MY FRIEND SHINICHI AND I SOUGHT OUT YOUR GRANDFATHER, THAT WE MIGHT LEARN THE MARTIAL ARTS.
"... AND OFTEN FOLLOWED YOUR MOTHER INTO BATTLE.
"AFTER ALL, ONE NEEDS NOT THE DRAGON FORCE TO FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT!
"HE WAS LIKE A FATHER TO US...
"... BUT A STERN TASKMASTER. WE TRAINED LONG AND HARD...
"AS TIME PASSED, WE FOUR FORGED A BOND WHICH MADE US MORE THAN FAMILY.
"THOSE WERE GOOD YEARS."
SHOULD'VE KNOWN IT WOULDN'T LAST.
WHAT HAPPENED?
FUNNY YOU SHOULD ASK...
"Y'SEE, BOTH SHINICHI AND I WERE IN LOVE WITH MIRANDA.
"IN THE END, SHE CHOSE TO FAVOR ME.
"IT WAS THEN THAT THE COUNTERFORCE--THE NEGATIVE, CHAOTIC ASPECT OF THE DRAGON'S POWER--WHISPERED SEDUCTIVELY IN SHINICHI'S EAR.

"THE COUNTERFORCE OFFERED SHINICHI GREAT POWER.
"FROM IT HE LEARNED MANY ARCANE SECRETS...
"...SECRETS HE HAD HOPED TO USE TO WIN MIRANDA'S HEART.
"BUT, ALAS, THE HUMAN HEART IS ONE PROVINCE OVER WHICH NEITHER FORCE NOR COUNTERFORCE HOLDS SWAY.
"WE WERE MARRIED.
"AND ON THAT DAY, SHINICHI TURNED FOREVER TOWARDS THE FACE OF EVIL.
"CAREFULLY HUSBANDING HIS GROWING POWER OVER THE FOLLOWING YEAR, MY FORMER FRIEND PLANNED TO STEAL THE DRAGON'S HEART FROM YOUR MOTHER WHEN SHE WAS MOST VULNERABLE...
"...DURING CHILDBIRTH.
"YOU CAN IMAGINE MY HORROR AS EBON TENTACLES OF PURE EVIL REACHED OUT FOR MY WIFE...
"...WRITHING PURPOSEFULLY...
"...MALICIOUSLY...

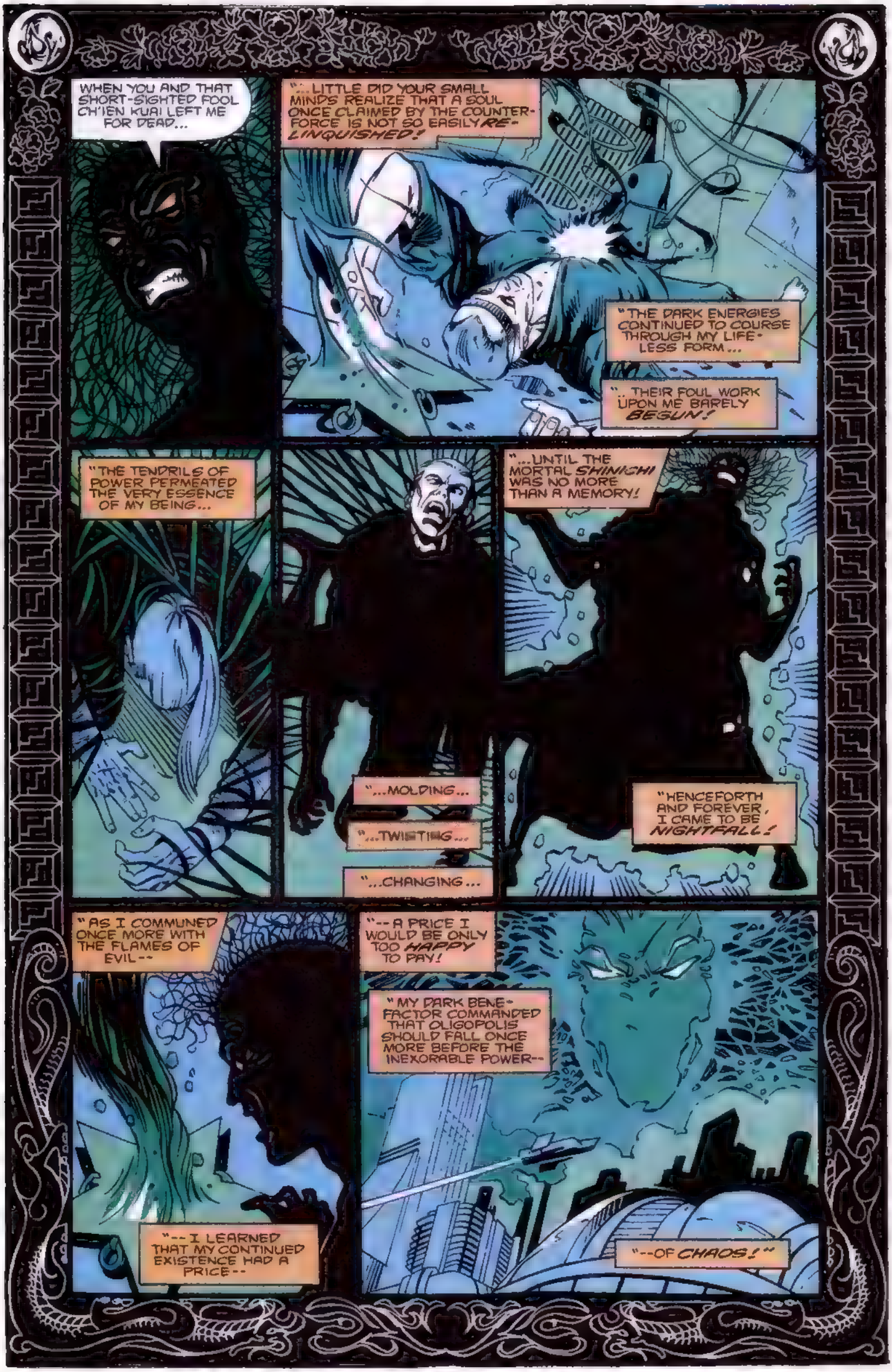
"...STRIVING TO TEAR THE POWER, AND HER LIFE -- YOUR LIVES -- FROM HER BODY.
"REALIZING THAT THE END WAS NEAR, MIRANDA PROTECTED THE BOTH OF YOU WITH A SMALL PORTION OF THE DRAGON FORCE, BINDING YOU TO IT -- AND TO EACH OTHER -- FOREVER.
"THE REMAINDER...
"...SHE BEQUEATHED TO HER FATHER.
"SHE DIED IN MY ARMS...
"...BUT NOT BEFORE GIVING BIRTH TO HEALTHY TWIN SONS...
"...BILLY AND JIMMY LEE.
"SENSEI SPOKE BRIEFLY TO ME OF A LEGEND FROM THE TIME OF YAN -- OF THE TWO WHO ARE ONE, TOUCHED BY YIN AND YANG, WHO SHALL EMBODY EACH, YET *NEVER* SUNDER THE WHOLE.
"THEN THE TIME FOR TALK WAS OVER...
"...AND THE TIME OF *RETRIBUTION* WAS AT HAND!


"VENGEANCE IS A DANGEROUS PATH -- ONE YOUR GRANDFATHER HAD HOPED TO WALK ALONE.
"THING WAS, I WOULDN'T LET HIM.
"MIRANDA MAY HAVE BEEN HIS DAUGHTER, BUT SHE WAS ALSO MY BELOVED WIFE.
"UNABLE TO DISSUADE ME, SENSEI SUMMONED UP THE DRAGON FORCE...
"... AND USED IT TO DIVINE THE SOURCE OF THE MYSTIC ATTACK.
"AS MIRANDA'S WIDOWER, I CLAIMED THE RIGHT OF FIRST COMBAT. SENSEI BEGRUDGINGLY ACQUIESCED.
"NOT MUCH CARING WHETHER I LIVED OR DIED, I RECKLESSLY BURST IN UPON THE MURDERER...
"PERHAPS IT WAS THE SHOCK OF SHINICHI'S BETRAYAL THAT GAVE HIM THE ADVANTAGE...
".. PERHAPS IT WAS THE COUNTERFORCE THAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE...
"...OR MAYBE HE WAS JUST BETTER THAN I WAS.
"EITHER WAY, MY TAIL HAD BEEN KICKED SEVEN WAYS FROM SUNDAY BY THE TIME SENSEI SAW FIT TO INTERVENE.
"...ONLY TO BEHOLD THE FACE OF MY ARMAMD.
"EMBOLDENED BY HIS VICTORY OVER ME, SHINICHI TURNED TO FACE HIS FORMER MASTER.

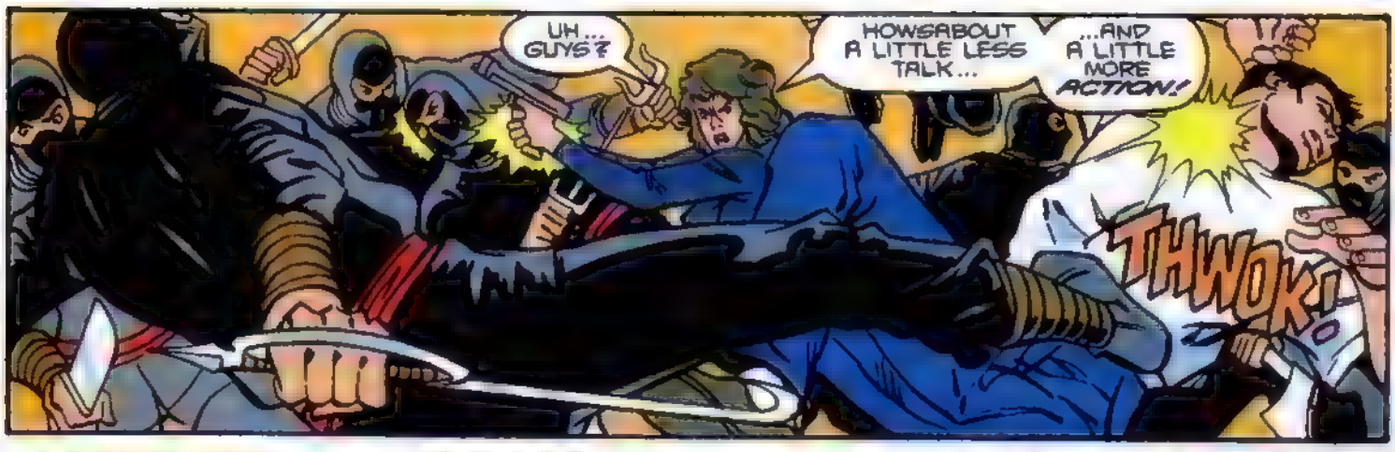
" MADDENED BY THE POWER WHICH HAD CORRUPTED HIM, MY FORMER FRIEND THOUGHT TO MAKE QUICK WORK OF THE OLD MAN.
" BUT SENSEI NOW WIELDED THE DRAGON FORCE...
"...AND HIS SOUL WAS DRIVEN BY A NEED FOR VENGEANCE...
"...THAT WOULD NOT BE DENIED!
" IN FAILING TO ACT WITH THE COMPASSION OF YAN, SENSEI HAD GIVEN HIMSELF OVER TO THE DARK FORCE...
"...IF ONLY FOR A MOMENT.
" THE DEED DONE, WE RETURNED TO THE DRAGON HOUSE TO REFLECT...
"...AND TO MOURN."

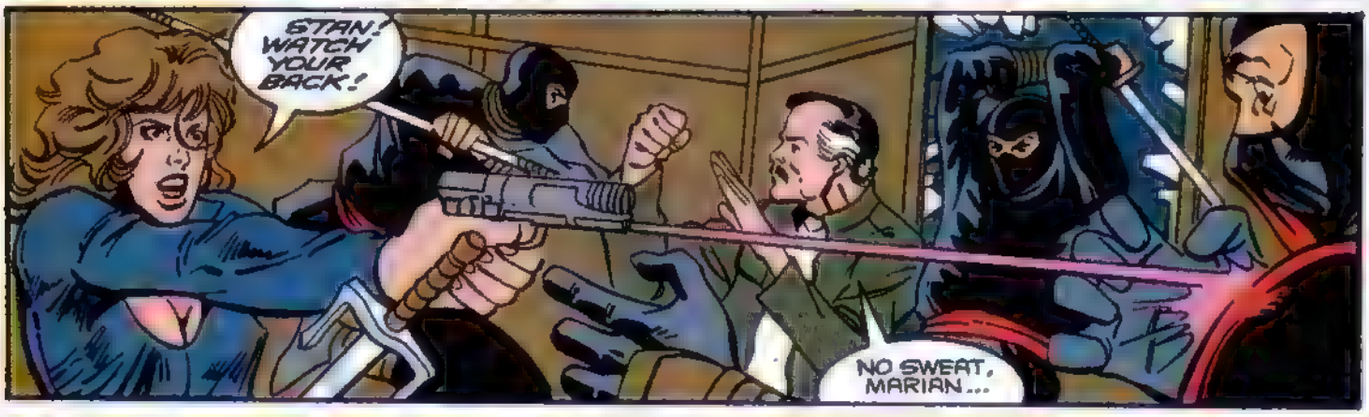
"DAYS LATER, WE MET AGAIN AT MIRANDA'S GRAVE.
"SENSEI WAS GREATLY TROUBLED BY HIS ACTIONS, AND FELT UNWORTHY TO CARRY THE HEART OF THE DRAGON.
MIRANDA
"HE OFFERED IT TO ME.
"BUT MY SIN WAS EASILY AS GREAT. THE DRAGON FORCE HAD, HOWEVER INDIRECTLY, COST ME EVERYTHING I HELD DEAR. I WANTED NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH IT.
"I WANTED ONLY TO FORGET.
"SENSEI SMILED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN DAYS. 'SOMETIMES,' HE SAID, 'IT IS BETTER TO REMEMBER.'
"HE ASKED ME TO REMAIN LONG ENOUGH TO WITNESS HIS PENANCE.
"WITH SHAME IN HIS HEART, CH'IEN KUAI RENOUNCED HIS NOBLE LINEAGE.
"HE WOULD BE KNOWN MERELY AS SEMSEI FOR THE REST OF HIS DAYS.
"THEN, AS HIS FINAL ACT OF CUSTODIAN OF THE DRAGON FORCE, HE RAISED FROM THE EARTH ITSELF A STATUE OF STONE...
"...CAST IN THE IMAGE OF THE DRAGON WHO HAD GRANTED THE POWER TO YAN LONG AGO.
"HE PLACED THE DRAGON FORCE WITHIN THE SACRED STATUE...
"...TO BE HELD THERE IN TRUST UNTIL ITS RIGHTFUL HEIRS WERE READY TO RECEIVE IT.
"AS FOR ME, I HIT THE ROAD, LEAVING THE BOTH OF YOU IN SENSEI'S CARE...
"...TAKING ONLY THIS BOOK AS A REMINDER OF TIMES BOTH GOOD AND BAD."

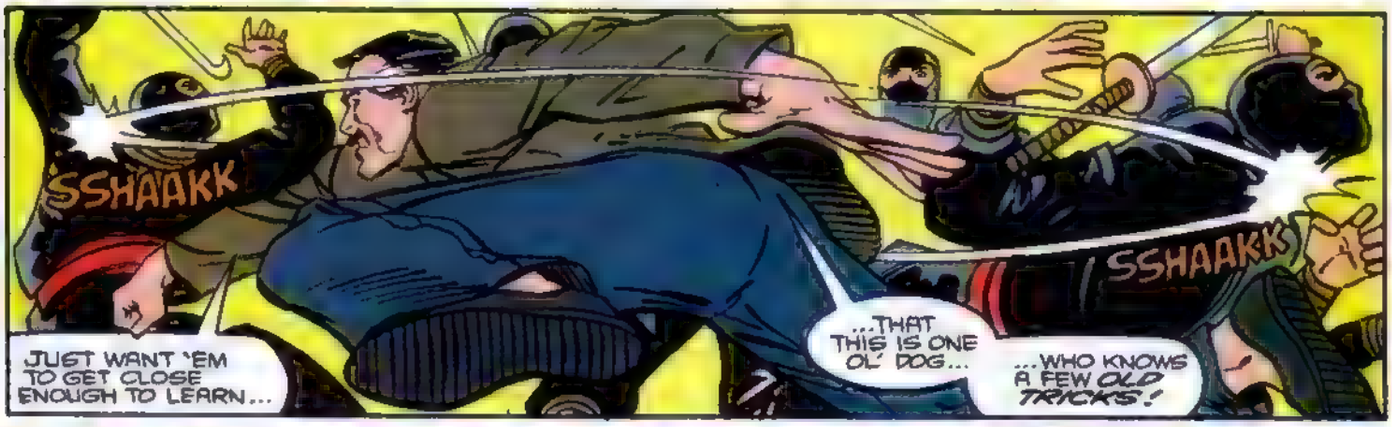
AFTER THAT, I JUST BUMMED AROUND, GOING WHEREVER THE WINDS OF FATE BLEW ME.
EVENTUALLY, THEY BLEW ME BACK TO OLIGOPOLIS ...
THE REST YOU ALREADY KNOW.
YOU SPIN A GOOD YARN, OLD TIMER, BUT THERE'RE STILL A FEW THINGS I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
NOT UNUSUAL.
I, TOO, HAVE QUESTIONS.
QUESTIONS ARE THE FIRST SYMPTOM OF A HEALTHY MIND AT WORK.
SENSEI TAUGHT YOU KIDS BETTER THAN I THOUGHT.
BUT YOU STILL HAVE A LOT TO LEARN.
DO NOT CHANGE THE SUBJECT!
IF YOU LEFT TO FORGET US, WHY COME BACK NOW?
LIKE YOUR GRANDFATHER ONCE SAID, "SOMETIMES IT'S BETTER TO REMEMBER."
BESIDES, THINGS WEREN'T QUITE AS DONE WITH AS WE'D THOUGHT.
HOW TRUE, O ONCE AND FORMER FRIEND...
...TRUER THAN YOU COULD EVER IMAGINE!


WHEN YOU AND THAT SHORT-SIGHTED FOOL CH'IEN KUAI LEFT ME FOR DEAD...
"...LITTLE DID YOUR SMALL MINDS REALIZE THAT A SOUL ONCE CLAIMED BY THE COUNTER-FORCE IS NOT SO EASILY *RELINQUISHED!*
"THE DARK ENERGIES CONTINUED TO COURSE THROUGH MY LIFELESS FORM...
"...THEIR FOUL WORK UPON ME BARELY *BEGUN!*
"THE TENDRILS OF POWER PERMEATED THE VERY ESSENCE OF MY BEING...
"...MOLDING...
"...TWISTING...
"...CHANGING...
"...UNTIL THE MORTAL *SHINICHI* WAS NO MORE THAN A MEMORY!
"HENCEFORTH AND FOREVER, I CAME TO BE *NIGHTFALL!*
"AS I COMMUNED ONCE MORE WITH THE FLAMES OF EVIL--
"--I LEARNED THAT MY CONTINUED EXISTENCE HAD A PRICE--
"--A PRICE I WOULD BE ONLY TOO *HAPPY* TO PAY!
"MY DARK BENEFACTOR COMMANDED THAT OLIGOPOLIS SHOULD FALL ONCE MORE BEFORE THE INEXORABLE POWER--
"--OF *CHAOS!*"

NOW THAT MY FORMER FRIEND HAS RETURNED, MY ASCENSION TO THE THRONE OF CHAOS MAY BEGIN IN EARNEST!
I MUST PREPARE A SUITABLE WELCOME.
UNDERTAKER! OVERTHROW! ATTEND ME!
GO TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE DRAGONS. LEAD MY SHADOW WARRIORS AGAINST THE HATED HOUSE OF LEE--
--WHILE I MAKE MY FINAL PREPARATIONS.
"CHAOS WILL RULE THIS NIGHT...
"...AND THE BACK OF THE DRAGON SHALL BE FOREVER BROKEN!"
...SO YOU THINK THAT NIGHTFALL IS TIED INTO THIS--"COUNTER-FORCE?"
I DON'T THINK...
I KNOW!
THE AURA IN THIS CITY'S SO PALPABLE EVEN YOU TWO SHOULD BE ABLE TO FEEL IT.
IF THIS IS TRUE, THEN WE MUST SEEK HIM OUT.
NOT JUST YET.
YOU'LL NEED MORE INSTRUCTION BEFORE YOU'RE READY TO GO TOE-TO-TOE WITH HIM!
BELIEVE ME, I SPEAK FROM EXPERIENCE!
SO WE JUST SIT AROUND AND WAIT?
I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, BILLY.
WHEN THE TIME COMES, HE AND HIS FORCES WILL PROBABLY FIND US!
BY THE DRAGON!
SCHRACK
I'LL GRANT YOU THAT MUCH, STAN...
...WHEN YOU'RE RIGHT, YOU'RE RIGHT!

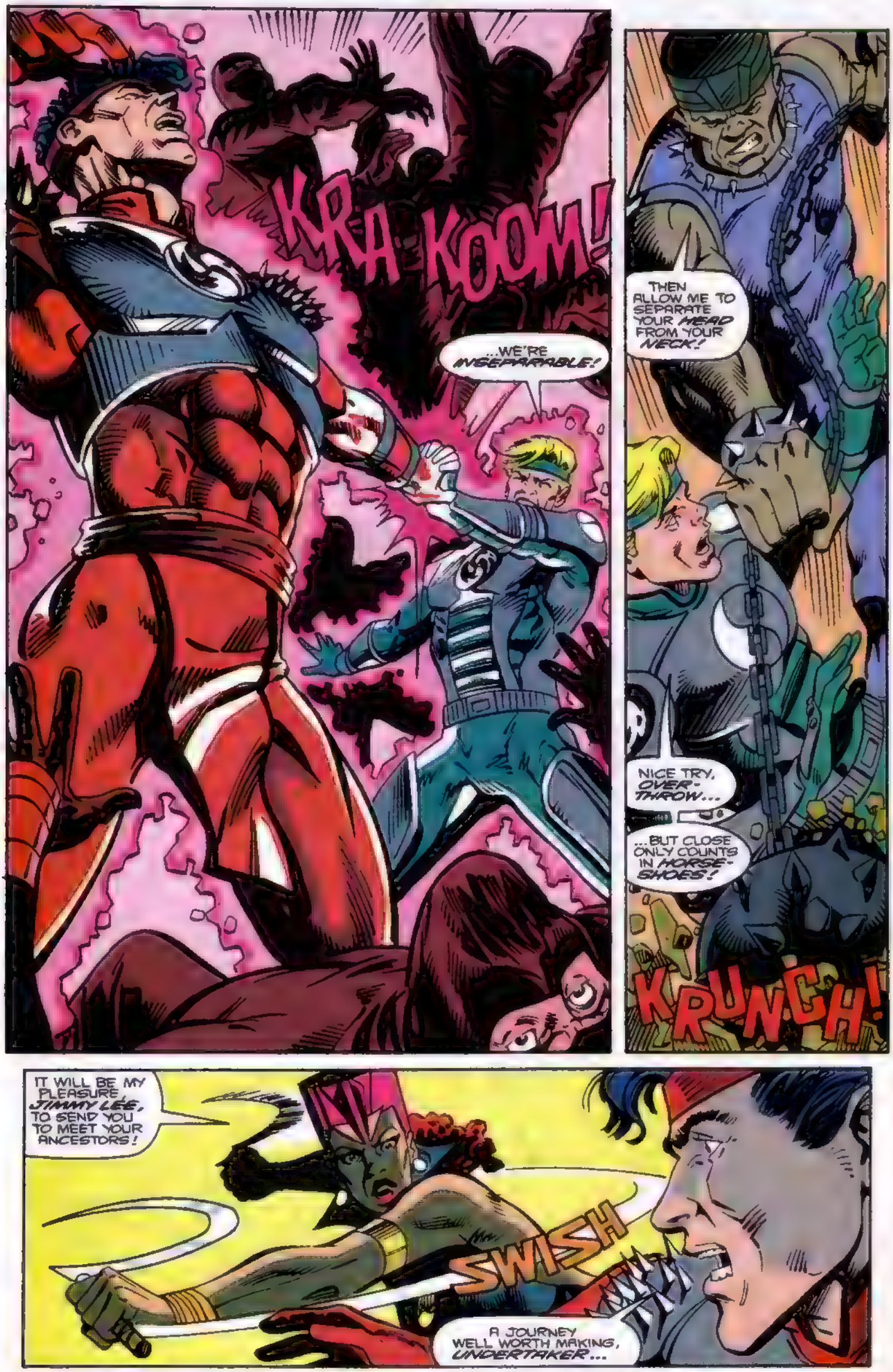

UH... GUYS?
HOWSABOUT A LITTLE LESS TALK...
...AND A LITTLE MORE ACTION!
THWOK!


STAN! WATCH YOUR BACK!
NO SWEAT, MARIAN...

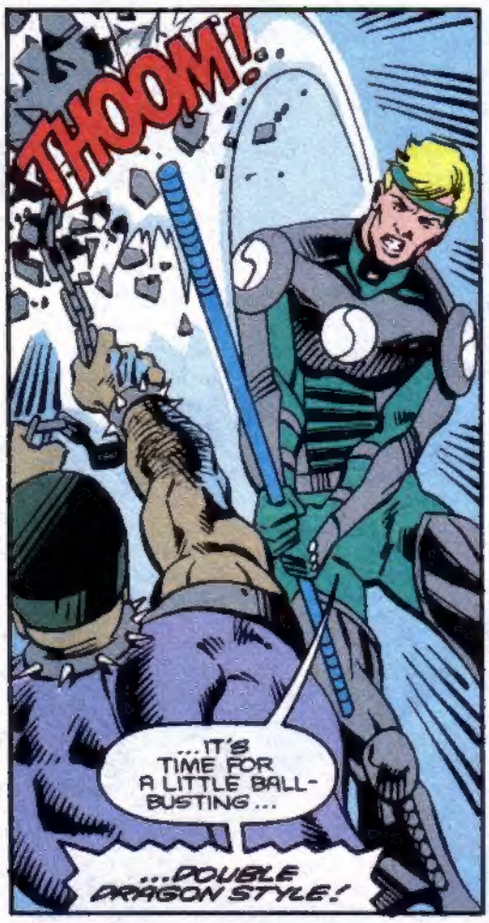

SSHAAKK
SSHAAKK
JUST WANT 'EM TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO LEARN...
...THAT THIS IS ONE OL' DOG...
...WHO KNOWS A FEW OLD TRICKS!

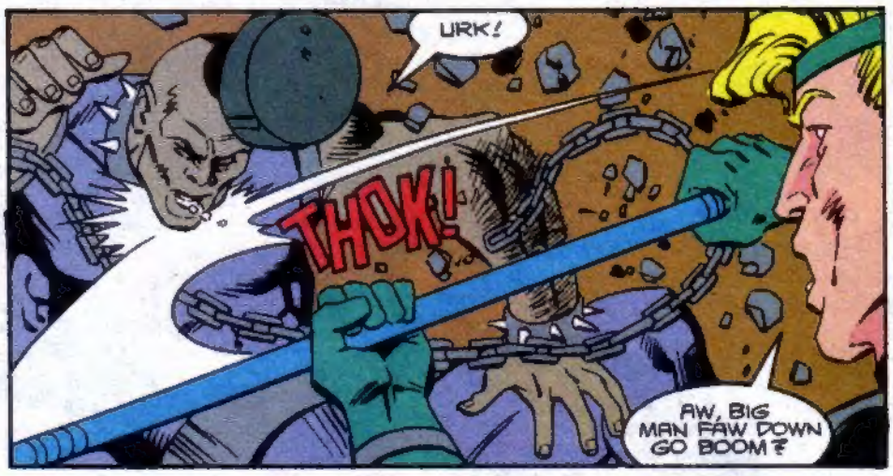
NOW, AS NIGHTFALL COMMANDED...
...REND THE DRAGON IN TWO!
BILL!
THE DRAGON FORCE!
COMING AT YOU!

YOU GUYS DON'T KNOW US VERY WELL, DO YOU?
Y'SEE, MY BROTHER AND ME...

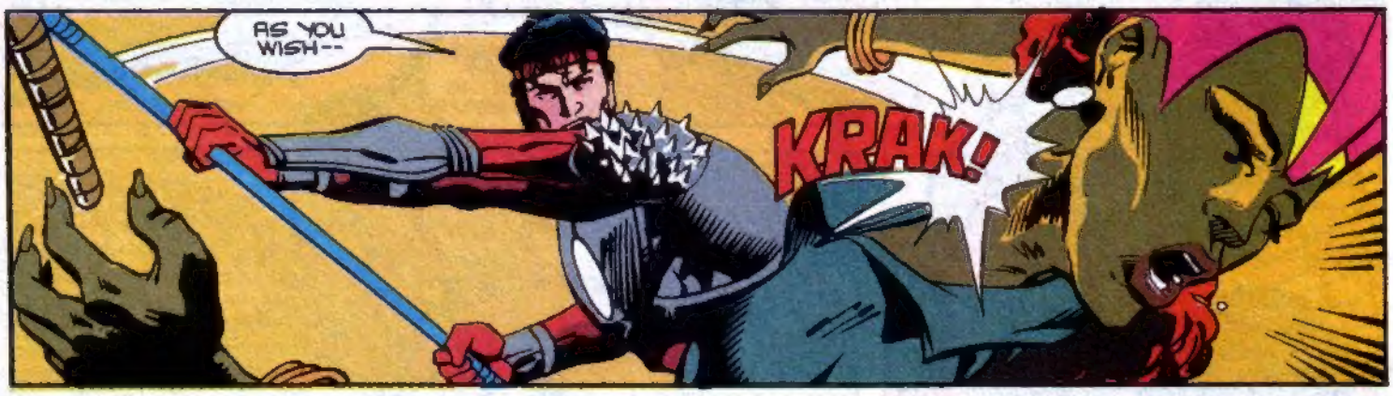

KRA-KOOM!
...WE'RE INSEPARABLE!
THEN ALLOW ME TO SEPARATE YOUR HEAD FROM YOUR NECK!
NICE TRY, OVER-THROW...
...BUT CLOSE ONLY COUNTS IN HORSE-SHOES!
KRUNCH!
IT WILL BE MY PLEASURE JIMMY LEE, TO SEND YOU TO MEET YOUR ANCESTORS!
SWISH
A JOURNEY WELL WORTH MAKING, UNDERTAKER...

FOOL! DO YOU NOT REALIZE THAT THE WAR IS ALREADY OVER?
...BUT ON A DAY OF MY CHOOSING!
THOK!
ONLY THIS BATTLE REMAINS.
AND IT IS AS GOOD...
...AS DONE!
PERHAPS, BUT THE OUTCOME MAY NOT BE AS YOU THINK!
STAND STILL, YOUNG ONE!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!
AS YOU WILL, PREPARE TO DIE, THAT WE MIGHT LEARN IF DRAGONS BLEED!
MAYBE LATER, THANKS.
FIRST...


THOOM!
...IT'S TIME FOR A LITTLE BALL-BUSTING...
...DOUBLE DRAGON STYLE!

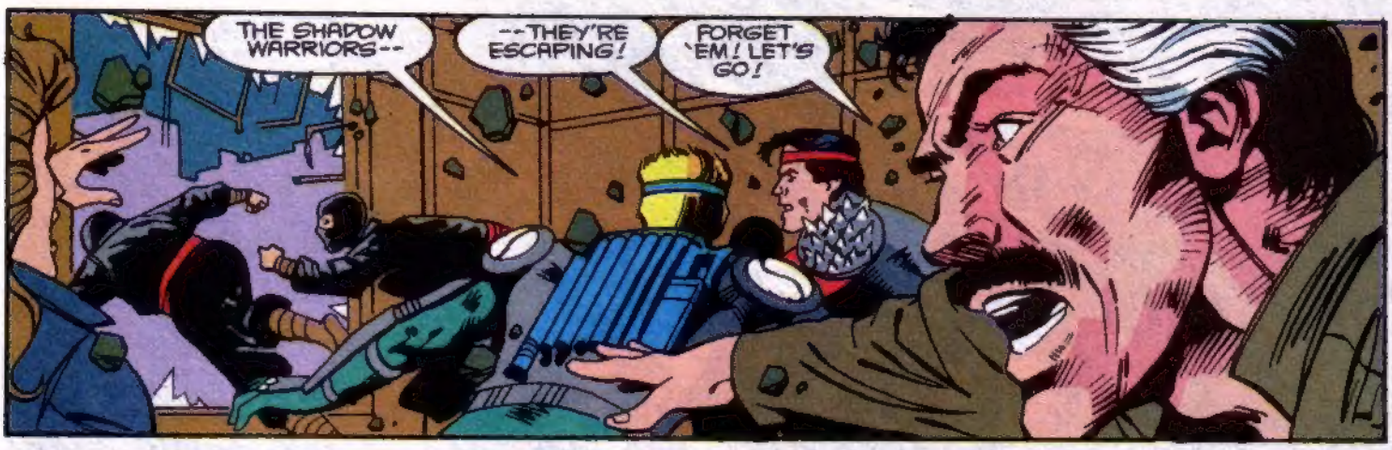

URK!
THOK!
AW, BIG MAN FAW DOWN GO BOOM?

ENOUGH!
IT IS TIME FOR THE FINAL BLOW TO BE STRUCK!

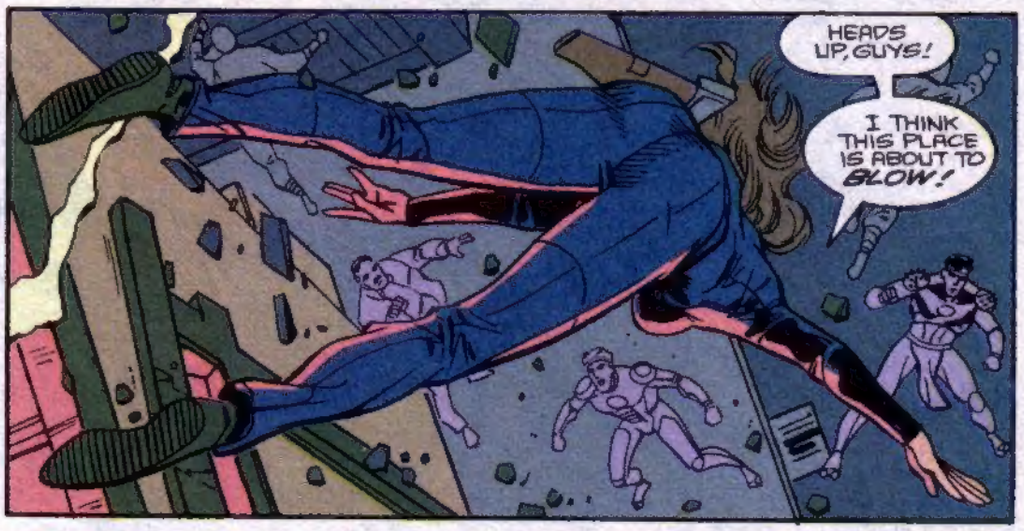

AS YOU WISH--
KRAK!

SO MUCH FOR THE SHADOW WARRIORS. IS EVERYONE ALL RIGHT?
SOME-THING STINKS.
THIS WAS ALL TOO EASY.
TOO EASY?
I'D HATE TO SEE WHAT YOU'D CONSIDER DIFFICULT!

HEY!
THE FLOOR...!
I THINK YOU JUST GOT YOUR WISH, KID!
EVERY-BODY OUT--
--NOW!
R-R-RUMBLE!


THE SHADOW WARRIORS--
--THEY'RE ESCAPING!
FORGET 'EM! LET'S GO!

WHERE TO?
AWAY FROM THE HOUSE--
--AND FAST!
NO ARGUMENT HERE!


HEADS UP, GUYS!
I THINK THIS PLACE IS ABOUT TO BLOW!

BA-HWROOM!
GOOD CALL, MARIAN!
THE JOINT'S JUMPIN'-- ALL OVER THE PAVEMENT!
AND THAT'S NOT THE WORST OF IT!

WHO...?
NIGHTFALL!

SHINICHI!
YOU RECOGNIZE ME... AFTER ALL THESE YEARS.
I'M FLATTERED ...
BUT OUR FAMILY REUNION IS NOT YET COMPLETE.
THERE IS ONE FINAL MEMBER LEFT UNACCOUNTED FOR!
FOR, ALTHOUGH, THE COUNTERFORCE HOLDS NO SWAY OVER THE HEART--
--THE SOUL IS ANOTHER MATTER ENTIRELY!
IS THAT NOT SO, MY LOVELY MIRANDA?
MOM!
NEXT: LAST OF THE DRAGONS!